



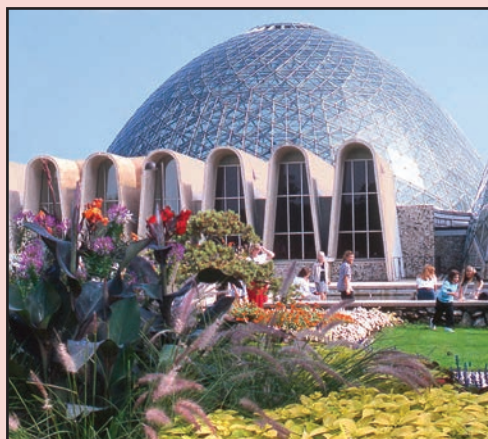
4TH DISTRICT COUNTY SUPERVISOR

MARINA DIMITRIJEVIC
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MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Winter 2016 Newsletter

Proudly Representing Milwaukee's Near South Side And Bay View Neighborhoods



Update on the Mitchell Park Domes

Earlier this year, the Domes at the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory were closed to the public so temporary fixes could be made to ensure the safety of visitors. The County Board allocated funds to install stainless steel mesh lining in each of the Domes to protect visitors from tiny pieces of concrete that are breaking off from the structure due to water seepage and deterioration.

The County Board has established a policy of repairing and preserving the Domes, and has formed a special task that is charged with developing a long term plan that "should aim to extend the maximum usable life of the existing facility." Sadly, not everyone agrees that we should preserve the Domes, and their future is in question.

The cost to repair the Domes would be significant, but investing in cultural assets like the Domes are important because they have an immeasurable positive impact on our quality of life. Hundreds of thousands of people visit the Domes every year. We should find a way to finance the repair and preservation of the Domes, and we can do this if we make it a priority.

Dear Neighbors,

Happy Holidays! This newsletter will bring you up to date on some of the work I have been doing as your County Board Supervisor. Inside, you will find information about several of my legislative initiatives, news about the 2017 budget, and some great updates about our neighborhood.

One of the most important things we do as supervisors is to shape and adopt the \$1.1 billion Milwaukee County budget. I'm very excited to announce that the 2017 budget includes an additional **\$1.2 million for improvements to South Shore Park**. Together with previous investments, next year's funding will mean **more than \$4 million invested into South Shore Park** in just three years. A lot of work has already been done, but many changes won't be visible until next year. **Check out page 2 for details.**

Another local park that will benefit from county infrastructure investments is **Pulaski Park**, where the 1930's era pavilion **will get a major upgrade and fully reopen after being closed for 10 years.**

Two frequently talked about budget items this year were the Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF), also known as the "wheel tax," and the GO Pass, an initiative that I sponsored in the 2015 budget. As you know, County Executive Abele proposed a \$60 annual VRF in order to address a structural budget gap many years in the making. **The County Board made changes to both and you can read more about the VRF and the GO Pass on page 5.**

Milwaukee County is poised to become the urban agricultural capital of the United States. In 2015, I launched the Sowing, Empowering, Eliminating, Deserts of food initiative (SEED). My SEED initiative allowed Milwaukee County to partner with Growing Power and other organizations to begin planting what will become the **largest urban fruit orchard in the nation.** **Read more on page 3.**

Lastly, while this is the first term under the new, state-imposed, "part time" status, I am working hard to make our county work for everyone, not just a few. I led an effort to ensure that breastfeeding mothers can work with dignity and also helped champion an increase to the living wage enabling working families to be lifted out of poverty. Make sure to enjoy some art and culture at the free days in our county and check out the pictures of me out and about. I hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

Marina Dimitrijevic
Milwaukee County Supervisor
District 4

If you would like to receive periodic updates on County news and events in the community, please sign up for my e-newsletter at:
www.milwaukee.gov/dimitrijevic

What Do You Think? Share your thoughts with me.

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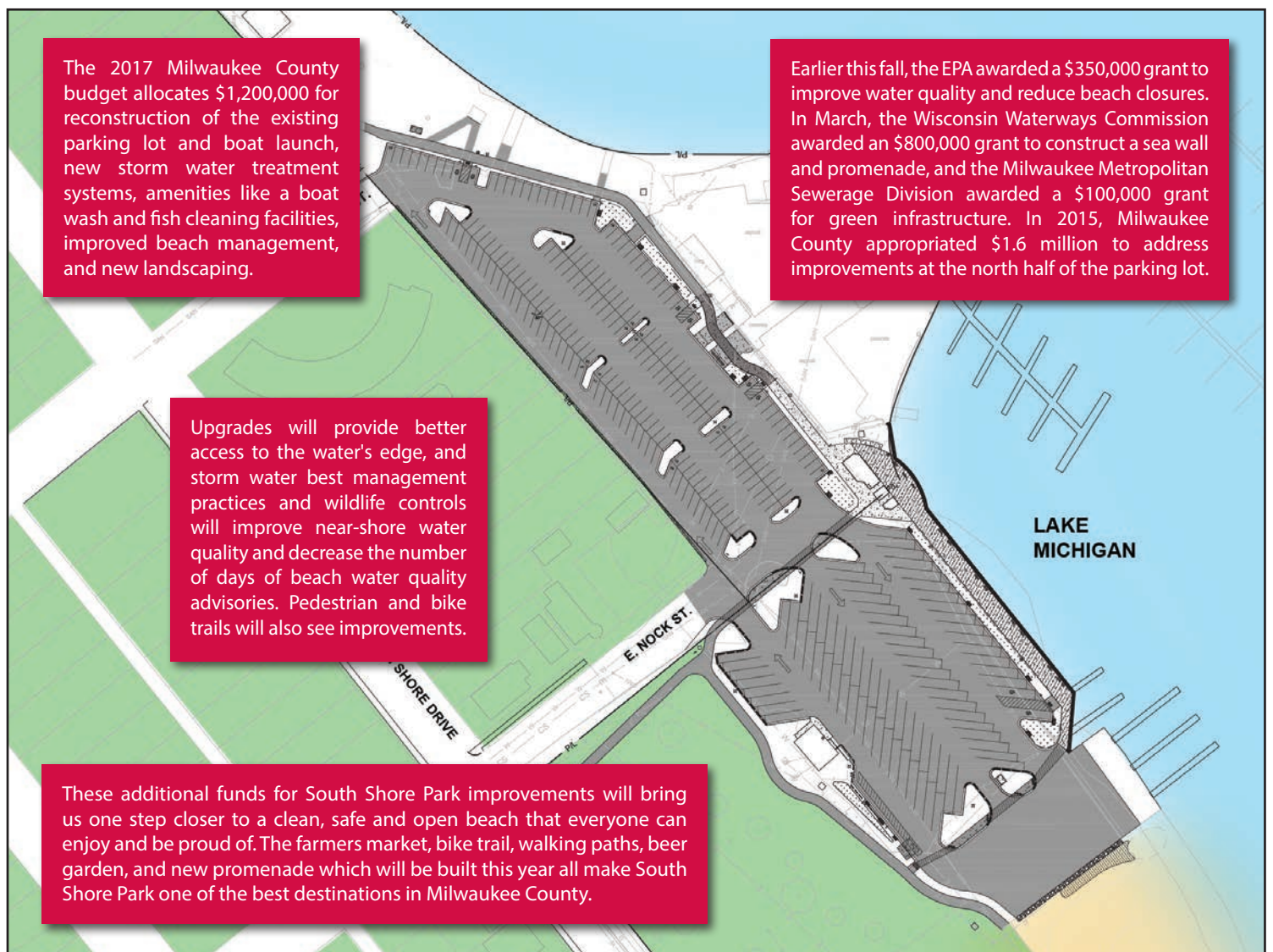
DELIVERING RESULTS TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

South Shore Park Improvement Project Advances with Major Investments



Left: The new mural at South Shore Terrace.
Above: Chris Vincent, the muralist, designed and painted two murals at the "Miller 1855" beer garden at the South Shore Terrace, which reflect the rich history of the Bay View Neighborhood.

The 2017 Milwaukee County budget will continue to bring major investments to the South Shore Park Improvement Project. These resources will improve beach and water quality, provide better access for a variety of users, and upgrade various facilities. One of the goals of the South Shore project is to re-open the beach and reduce runoff pollution from the parking lot. Soon you will see the difference!



MY S.E.E.D. PROGRAM BEARS FRUIT

Milwaukee Plants Largest Urban Orchard in the Nation



Ever since the rise of globalization and the corresponding deindustrialization of America, Milwaukee has struggled to establish a new identity. Once the “machine shop to the world,” Milwaukee County became part of the “rust belt,” a term that doesn’t at all reflect the resilience, optimism and progressive orientation of our communities.

Our economy never will be as one-dimensional as it was in the past, and neither will our identity as a community. We have to invest in a wide variety of economic development strategies and embrace the opportunities for becoming known for a variety of successful initiatives and areas of concentration.

One successful economic development strategy is called a cluster approach, which simply means a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, universities, non-profits and economic development organizations in a particular field. An example of success using this strategy is Milwaukee’s Water Council, and the establishment of Milwaukee as a hub for fresh water research and water-related businesses.

"The time is ripe for Milwaukee to lead the urban agriculture revolution."

Another type of economic development that is already well underway in a variety of forms throughout Milwaukee County is urban agriculture. In fact, Milwaukee is home to one of the world’s most successful and well-known urban agricultural organizations: Growing Power.

Growing Power already is beginning to use a cluster approach to economic development, by leading and fostering investment in urban farms, community-supported agriculture, partnerships with grade schools and universities, vertical farms, aquaponics and, most recently, urban orchards.

Just last week, Milwaukee County, Growing Power, the city of Oak Creek and Stark Nurseries celebrated the establishment of the largest urban orchard in the United States. Acres of county land in the Oak Creek Parkway and McGovern Park on Milwaukee’s far north side are now home to organic, plum, pear and apple trees that were donated by Stark Nurseries. In a few short years, our community will enjoy the fruits of this unique public-private partnership and nearly 3,000 fruit trees.

Milwaukee County’s S.E.E.D. Program (Sewing, Empowering and Eliminating Deserts of food) seeks to increase food security while providing more nutritional, local food choices for our families. Eliminating food deserts, where fresh produce is more than a mile out of reach, should be a public health priority. Milwaukee faces many health challenges such as obesity, diabetes and increased infant mortality, all of which follow our racial and economic disparities and trends.

Increasing our investment in urban agricultural initiatives such as urban orchards has the potential to put Milwaukee on the map as a leader in this emerging industry. Urban agriculture doesn’t just provide better access to healthy food, but also creates economic opportunities for businesses and workforce development. Soon, the cost of transporting food from places such as California will make growing locally even more economically attractive.



Workers planting organic apple, peach, plum, and pear trees at what will be the largest urban orchard in the nation.



Supervisors Steve Taylor and Marina Dimitrijevic speaking with Will Allen, the founder of Growing Power.



Marina joined Supervisors Jason Haas and Steve Taylor, Parks Director John Dargle, Oak Creek Mayor Steve Scaffidi, Senator Lena Taylor, Will Allen of Growing Power and Ken Lane of Stark Brothers Nurseries & Orchards for a ceremonial fruit tree planting in Oak Creek.

Investing in urban agricultural has the potential to transform our community food system and establish Milwaukee as the urban agriculture capital of the nation. Growing a green economy in Milwaukee could help erase our label as the worst place to raise an African-American child. We can improve the health of our at-risk populations, beautify our neighborhoods and even increase the life expectancy of people living in poorer neighborhoods with this new vision.

The time is ripe for Milwaukee to lead the urban agriculture revolution. Let’s use this opportunity to dig deep and plant the seeds of economic development, workforce training, entrepreneurship and good health that will bring economic and food security for all of our neighbors.

IMPROVING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Time and Space for Breastfeeding

When I returned to work after the birth of my son, I learned that there is limited space in my workplace, the Milwaukee County Courthouse, where nursing mothers can comfortably pump breast milk in a safe and clean environment.



I introduced legislation that ensures that County employees are provided the time and place to pump breast milk to nourish their children. Supporting working mothers supports working families.

In addition, County facilities like Mitchell International Airport and the Milwaukee County Zoo now have lactation stations for nursing mothers to feed or pump breast milk for their child.



Marina was joined by Supervisors Supreme Moore Omokunde and Sequanna Taylor at the Community Breastfeeding Walk.



Marina spoke about the importance of Breastfeeding at the Community Breastfeeding Walk Event.

Living Wage Ordinance



With her new baby Rafael, Supervisor Dimitrijevic spoke about the economic importance of a living wage now and in the future for all.

Real wages, real income and living standards have been stagnant for more than three decades. For the bottom end of the labor market that has grown dramatically, wages have been declining with more than 40% of all employment now in occupations paying less than \$15 per hour.

Raising the minimum wage will raise the quality of life for everyone, because as we lift the wage floor, all wages will rise. That's why, in 2014, the Milwaukee County Board took the first steps to address income inequality and adopted its first "living wage" ordinance. The ordinance was based on the federal poverty level for a family of four, which calculated to \$11.32 for the minimum hourly wage. In 2016, it only increased to \$11.68. We felt a change was needed.

This fall the Board adopted new legislation that will increase the Milwaukee County living wage on an annual basis, eventually establishing a minimum wage of \$15 per hour by 2021. The annual wage increases will start at \$12.35 on January 1, 2017, and increase to \$13.01 in 2018, to \$13.67 in 2019, to \$14.34 in 2020, and to \$15 in 2021.

Supervisor Marcelia Nicholson, sponsor of the ordinance, said "This legislation has the opportunity to positively impact hundreds of people now working for Milwaukee County or for businesses that contract with the County."



Supervisor Dimitrijevic and County Executive Chris Abele explain why wages must increase for hard working residents.



County Supervisor Marcelia Nicholson and Marina worked together on the Living Wage Ordinance.

A BUDGET THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Vehicle Registration Fee

Milwaukee County's structural deficit has finally caught up with us after 14 years without a County Executive willing to propose a tax increase. This year it became clear that we can no longer kick the can down the road. Closing the \$37 million 2017 budget gap required significant new revenue or unacceptable cuts. Supervisors found a middle ground and passed a responsible, balanced budget.

Most experts agree that a strong transit system is essential for our regional economy. Rob Henken of the non-partisan Public Policy Forum testified at the October 31, 2016 budget hearing that at least **"some Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) revenue is required"** in 2017, "in order to **maintain existing service levels, address infrastructure needs, and avoid budget gimmicks.**"

Supervisors listened to constituents' concerns about Abele's \$60 wheel tax, and balanced those concerns with the need for revenue by cutting the wheel tax in half, to \$30. If the VRF were entirely eliminated from the 2017 budget, the consequences could be devastating for our economy. \$0 in VRF revenue means bus service would have to be cut by 16%, or nearly 230,000 bus hours. Critical, job-creating infrastructure projects to maintain our roads and highways would be delayed or canceled.

In addition to slashing Abele's wheel tax in half, supervisors also cut more than \$13.6 million in spending and reduced the County Executive's proposed increase in the property tax levy in order to balance the budget.

Pulaski Park Pavilion to Reopen in Spring 2017

As a follow up to significant investments in the Pulaski Indoor Pool, the 2016 budget allocated funds to renovate the 1930's era Pulaski Park pavilion, which has been closed for nearly 10 years. The restored pavilion will be accessible to the public for all manner of events, such as group meetings, summer camp events, and community gatherings.

The improvements to the pavilion include repairs to the interior and exterior, and making sure the 5,000 square foot building is code compliant. To date, the lead pipes and asbestos have been removed from the pavilion, and interior work is soon to begin.

Interior repairs include new plumbing fixtures, ADA compliant bathrooms, installation of new light fixtures, and new paint for the community room. Exterior repairs include replacing or repairing the rotting trim, fascia, soffits, purlins and roof shingles, and a fresh coat of paint for the exterior of the building.

Repairing and reopening the pavilion will breathe new life into Pulaski Park and give community groups and families a place to gather. Local groups like the KK River Neighbors in Action and the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center have helped organize residents to improve our neighborhoods around Pulaski Park, and I hope you will join me in thanking them for their efforts.

Modifying the GO Pass

The GO Pass is an extremely popular service that provides no-cost bus rides to senior citizens and disabled persons in Milwaukee County. We introduced the GO Pass in 2015 and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Currently over 30,000 of our neighbors use the GO Pass.

There were proposals this year to eliminate the GO Pass entirely. Eliminating the GO Pass would be catastrophic for senior citizens and the disabled who have low, fixed incomes. I believe that the demand for the GO Pass is a clear sign that people need it.

People who use the GO Pass value the independence and ability to participate in our economy that it provides. Many GO Pass users are on fixed incomes and knowing that they will always have access to reliable transportation provides a sense of security. A large number of GO Pass users are people who work and who otherwise might not be able to take advantage of opportunities to contribute to our economy.

"The GO Pass is worth its weight in gold," said Disability Rights Wisconsin's Barbara Beckert, who co-chairs the Make It Work Milwaukee Coalition. "You're giving people a fighting chance to succeed."

I was proud to be an early champion of the GO Pass, but I agree with my colleagues on the County Board that some changes are necessary. Before we had the GO Pass, seniors and disabled individuals paid a half fare of \$1.10 per ride. Starting in 2017, GO Pass users will pay a \$5 registration fee for a three-year pass and starting in 2018, GO Pass users will start paying a \$1 daily fare. Together, these measures will generate about \$2.2 million annually.



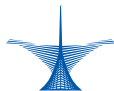
The Pulaski Park Pavilion shown prior to the restoration work that is taking place.

**SUPERVISOR DIMITRIJEVIC INVITES YOU TO ENJOY
FREE MILWAUKEE COUNTY ATTRACTIONS!**



Free to all the first Thursday of every month, sponsored by Kohl's. County residents get \$2 off every day.

800 W. Wells St., Milwaukee
(414) 278-2728 • mpm.edu



MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM

Free the first Friday of every month for all visitors, sponsored by Meijer.

700 N. Art Museum Dr., Milwaukee
(414) 224-3200 • mam.org



Free on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. to Noon for Milwaukee County residents. Excludes major holidays.

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2017 Free Days: 1/7, 2/4, 3/4, 10/7, 11/4, 12/2, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day & New Year's Day.

10001 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee
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Marina in the Community



Top Left: Milwaukee County supports the Time of the Month Club, a group that collects feminine hygiene items for women in homeless shelters.

Top Right: Marina proudly welcomes a delegation of public officials and press members from Serbia, the country where her father Sasha is from, here to learn about our democracy.

Bottom Left: Marina with Joe Walsh at the new Cupertino Community Garden, part of the SEED Project, on the northeast corner of Shore Dr. and Ontario St.

Bottom Right: Marina, with her son and Supervisor Jason Haas, sharing a booth at the Bay View Bash, which donates all proceeds to organizations in the community.

